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ABSTRACT

Appropriate for secondary school social studies or community programs, this publication considers United States-Soviet conflict. The first of four sections, "US-Soviet Relations at the Crossroads," looks at different American perceptions of the Soviet Union. "Regional Conflicts, Global Ambitions" focuses on Nicaragua as a case study of increasing Soviet influence that has arisen in other areas over the past 40 years and considers how the United States should respond to this influence. "Trading with the Soviets" questions whether it is in the United States' interests to broaden U.S.-Soviet contacts through trade and cultural exchange. "Aggressive Intentions, Defensive Reactions" looks at the controversy over building American defenses in the arms race. "New Rules for Superpower Relations?" examines how the superpower rivalry should be managed. Readings are accompanied by political cartoons and photographs. Supplementary material includes a reading list, acknowledgements, a materials order form, and two copies of a questionnaire concerning participants' views before and after the study of this topic. (LP)

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NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

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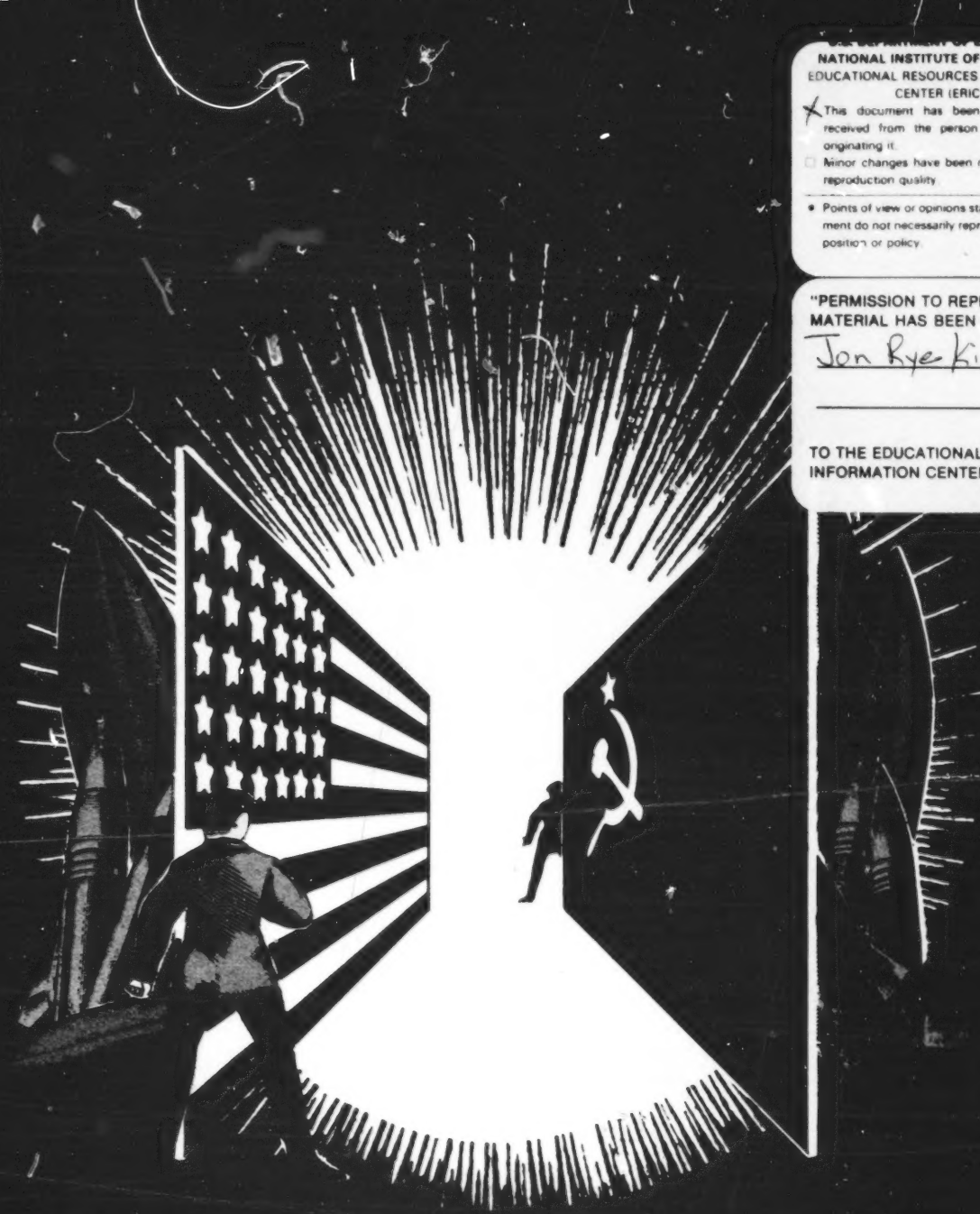

The Soviets: What Is the Conflict About?

When columnist George Will recently remarked that "politics is 95 percent talk," his point was to call attention to the importance in a democracy of a certain kind of conversation. In a truly democratic nation, that conversation cannot be limited to the talking and listening that goes on among elected officials and a small elite of policy advisers.

It is true that the media bring an ample portion of news into our homes, and that allows leaders to speak to us. But it is not enough for us to sit there, passively watching the evening news. Democracy is not, after all, a spectator sport.

Lots of little "publics" called special interest groups are active, vocal, and well organized — and *their* voices are loud and clear enough to be heard. Of course there is nothing wrong with special interest politics. But something important is missing from the conversation of democracy if we talk only to people who share our particular interests, and if political leaders listen only to the petitions of special interest groups.

What is needed is for us to find a way of speaking to elected officials not as representatives of special interest groups but as individuals, as a lobby for the public interest.

That may sound hopelessly naive. It is hard enough for most of us to understand issues to the point of discerning what is in the public interest. It is harder still to believe that anyone is interested in hearing what we think and feel.

That is why the Domestic Policy Association was formed four years ago, to bring Americans together each fall to discuss urgent public issues, and then to share the outcome of those conversations with leaders. The DPA represents the pooled resources of a nationwide network of organizations — including libraries and colleges, museums and membership groups, service clubs and community organizations. The National Issues Forum, which the DPA has organized, provides a nonpartisan forum in which citizens discuss specific policy issues and air their differences.

The goal of the community forums that take place each year under the auspices of the National Issues Forum is to stimulate and sustain a certain kind of conversation — a genuinely useful debate that moves beyond the bounds of partisan politics, beyond the airing of grievances to mutually acceptable responses to common problems.

Each year, the convenors of this nationwide effort choose three issues for discussion. This year's topics are tax reform, the purpose and limits of the welfare state, and U.S.-Soviet relations. There is an issue book like this one for each of the topics. These books are intended to frame the debate by presenting different choices, and the arguments for and against them.

The forum process doesn't end in those local meetings. Each year, the DPA convenes a series of meetings with national leaders to convey the outcome of these forums. One such meeting will take place next March at the Gerald Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The experience of the past three years indicates that leaders *are* interested in your considered judgment about these issues. We have provided an issue ballot at the beginning and end of this book. With these two ballots, we can help leaders to understand what they are most interested in knowing — how initial thoughts and feelings about an issue differ from the more considered judgment that people reach after thoughtful discussion. Before you begin reading and after you have attended community forums and given some thought to the issue, I urge you to fill out these ballots and mail them back to us.

So, as you begin this issue book from the Domestic Policy Association, you are joining thousands of Americans in the fourth annual season of the National Issues Forum. As the editor of these issue books, I am pleased to welcome you to this common effort.

Keith Melville

Keith Melville
Editor-in-Chief
The National Issues Forum

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

1. The Soviets: What Is the Conflict About?

One of the reasons why people participate in the National Issues Forum is that they want leaders to know how they feel about these issues. The Domestic Policy Association has promised to convey a sense of your thinking on the topic of US-Soviet relations both locally and at the national level. In order to present your thoughts and feelings about this issue, we'd like you to fill out this short questionnaire *before* you attend forum meetings (or before you read this issue book, if you buy it elsewhere) and another short questionnaire — which appears at the end of this issue book after the forum (or after you've read this material).

The leader of your local forum will ask you to hand in this ballot at the end of the forum sessions. If it is inconvenient for you to do that, or if you do not attend a meeting, please send the completed ballot to the DPA in the attached envelope. If no envelope is enclosed, you should send this ballot to the Domestic Policy Association at 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45429. A report summarizing participants' views will be available from the DPA next spring.

PART I

1. Which of the following best describes what you see as the basis of our conflict with the Soviet Union? Our conflict with the Soviets is primarily:

a. Based on our opposition to Soviet attempts to promote worldwide revolution ☐
b. A contest between great powers, each pursuing its political interests, much like other conflicts between powerful nations in the past ☐
c. A struggle between historic rivals based on years of misunderstanding and miscalculation by both sides ☐

2. Which statement is closer to your view?

a. We should try to contain Soviet influence wherever it appears ☐
b. There are times when it is appropriate for us to do nothing, even when there is clear evidence of Soviet influence in other nations ☐

3. Which assessment of Soviet intentions is closer to your view?

a. To maintain their power, the Soviets must create a series of satellite governments throughout the world. Communism must grow or die ☐
b. The Soviets are neither able nor eager to carry out a program of world domination ☐

4. Which of these views of US policy in Nicaragua do you agree with more?

a. A Marxist regime in Nicaragua is such a threat that we should do everything we can to oppose the Sandinista government, short of sending in troops — such as assisting the *contras*, and imposing economic sanctions ☐
b. A war of harassment against Nicaragua is morally wrong. We should not aid forces such as the *contras* who engage in terrorism ☐

PART II

5. When it comes to trade and cultural exchange with the Soviet Union, which of these statements comes closer to your view?

a. Trade and cultural exchanges give us a chance to develop a constructive relationship with the Soviet Union ☐
b. It is not in our interest to encourage contacts that the Soviets use to their advantage ☐

6. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. Trade and cultural exchange with the Soviets are in our own economic self-interest ☐
b. The Soviets gain more from such trading relationships than we do ☐

PART II (continued)

7. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. Limiting trade and contacts with the Soviet Union is not in our interest ☐

b. Economic boycotts pose a significant threat to the Soviet system and could be useful in persuading Soviet leaders to change their policies ☐

8. When it comes to promoting trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union, which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should do all we can to promote trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union ☐

b. We should cease trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviets until they change their system ☐

PART III

9. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. The Soviets are primarily motivated by offensive concerns; they seek a military advantage to further their goal of world domination ☐

b. The Soviets are primarily motivated by defensive concerns; throughout history, they've been invaded by powerful aggressors and they're obsessed with the need to defend themselves ☐

10. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should build up American nuclear forces so that they are superior to Soviet forces in every category ☐

b. Our nuclear weapons have just one purpose, to deter the Soviets from attacking us. Anything more than that is both wasteful and provocative ☐

11. Which statement about the arms control talks at Geneva comes closer to your view?

a. The Soviets' aim at Geneva is propaganda, not serious negotiations to reach a fair arms control agreement ☐

b. The Soviets are interested in serious arms control negotiations ☐

12. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should weaken the Soviets at every opportunity because anything that weakens our enemies strengthens us ☐

b. It is in our interest for the Soviets to have a strong and stable economy, and for them to feel that their arms are generally equivalent to ours ☐

PART IV

13. Which of the following DPA activities did you participate in?

Read the booklet ☐
Attended a forum ☐
Both ☐
Neither ☐

14. Did you participate in a DPA forum *last* year?

Yes ☐
No ☐

15. Did you (or will you) participate in DPA forums on other topics *this* year?

Yes ☐
No ☐

16. Which of these age groups are you in?

Under 18 ☐
18-29 ☐
30-44 ☐
45-64 ☐
65 and over ☐

17. Are you a man or a woman?

Man ☐
Woman ☐

18. What is your zip code? _____

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

The Soviets: What Is the Conflict About?

Prepared for the
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by the
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The Domestic Policy Association

The Domestic Policy Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association devoted to raising the level of public awareness and discussion about important public issues. It consists of a nationwide network of institutions — colleges and universities, libraries, service clubs, membership groups, and civic organizations — that bring citizens together to discuss public issues. The DPA represents their joint effort to enhance what they already do by working with a common schedule and common materials. In addition to convening meetings each fall in hundreds of communities in every region of the country, the DPA also convenes meetings at which it brings citizens and national leaders together to discuss these issues and the outcome of community forums.

Each year, participating institutions select the topics that will be discussed in the issue forums. On behalf of the Domestic Policy Association, the Public Agenda Foundation — a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and education organization that devises and tests new means of taking national issues to the public — prepares issue books and discussion guides for use in these forums. The Domestic Policy Association welcomes questions about the program, and invites individuals and organizations interested in joining this network to write to: The Domestic Policy Association, 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45429.

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1

US-Soviet Relations at the Crossroads

"Much of the debate over the rules according to which we should relate to our principal adversary comes down to different perceptions of the Soviets."

In the spring of 1985, various events combined to create an opportunity for new directions in the relationship between the United States and the USSR. In March, Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to power represented the passing of the torch to a new generation of Soviet leaders. The change of command in Moscow coincided with a change of attitude in Washington. For several months, the Administration had taken a more conciliatory tone toward the Soviets. When Gorbachev took office, President Reagan indicated an interest in meeting with him, and a comprehensive review of policy toward the Soviet Union was begun in anticipation of high-level meetings.

On various occasions, Mr. Gorbachev has seemed to welcome the prospect of new understandings and reduced tensions between the superpowers. He has stressed particularly the significance of the comprehensive arms talks that have been taking place in Geneva. "The course of events can be changed sharply," as Gorbachev said, "if tangible success is achieved at the Soviet-American talks on space and nuclear arms."

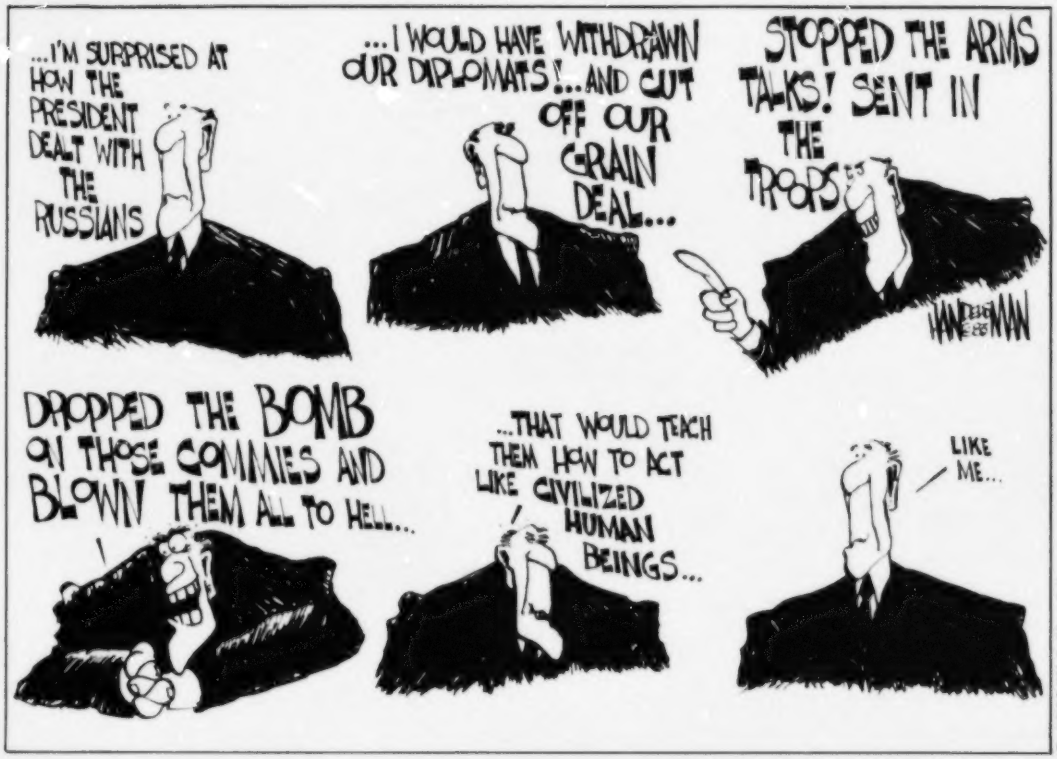
The arms negotiations in Geneva represent just one of the fronts on which US-Soviet relations are being reassessed. For the first time since 1979, when US-Soviet relations turned sour in the wake of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, high-level trade talks between the two nations were reopened in May to determine what kind of commercial connection should exist between the two nations.

If a summit meeting is arranged, Reagan and Gorbachev will have a good deal to talk about. One need only glance at a newspaper to be reminded of the far-reaching effects of the Soviet-American relationship. In one column, we are told of the President's deliberations with Congress over aid to Nicaragua, a Central American nation that some regard as the newest addition to the Soviet bloc. In another news story we learn of a congressional debate about the merits of various missile systems and their contribution to national security — a discussion in which Soviet weapons and military intentions figure prominently. The long shadow of US-Soviet relations extends to the situation of midwestern farmers, who have a direct stake in the grain trade to Russia. As the past two Olympics have demonstrated, the superpower conflict leaves its mark even in areas that would seem to be far removed from international politics.

Rethinking the Rules

In several respects, the US-Soviet relationship is at a crossroads. Accordingly, this may be a particularly fruitful time to take a fresh look at the rules according to which the two nations relate to one another.

Throughout the 40 years of the postwar period, the United States and the Soviet Union have been the dominant superpowers. But as former Senator J. William Fulbright remarked several years ago, even "after decades of constant interaction, we have still not made up our minds about what the Russians are


...I'M SURPRISED AT HOW THE PRESIDENT DEALT WITH THE RUSSIANS
...I WOULD HAVE WITHDRAWN OUR DIPLOMATS!...AND CUT OFF OUR GRAIN DEAL...
STOPPED THE ARMS TALKS! SENT IN THE TROOPS
HANDELSMAN
DROPPED THE BOMB ON THOSE COMMIES AND BLOWN THEM ALL TO HELL...
...THAT WOULD TEACH THEM HOW TO ACT LIKE CIVILIZED HUMAN BEINGS...
LIKE ME...
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really like." Consequently, relations between the two nations have lurched back and forth between threatening gestures and affirmations of a desire for more cordial relations.

In the early months of the Gorbachev regime, when President Reagan exchanged letters with the new Soviet premier, both leaders emphasized what the two nations have in common. President Reagan called for "renewed progress toward a more stable peace." Mr. Gorbachev replied soon after by recalling the "spirit of cooperation which united us all" against the Nazis, and reiterated the Soviet Union's commitment to "a world without wars, a world without weapons."

Yet in many public pronouncements, Reagan and Gorbachev have expressed deep-seated hostilities. In an address to European leaders in May, President Reagan described the Soviet government as a corrupt system whose policies are causing global disruptions, and he later mocked the Soviet regime as an economic and political failure both at home and abroad. Mr. Gorbachev countered by condemning the United States as "the forward edge of the war menace to mankind."

For most of the postwar period, American policy toward the Soviet Union has been characterized by a similar inconsistency. In the 1940s, when the Soviets staked a claim to much of Eastern Europe, President Truman responded with a hard-nosed policy of containment. Under President Eisenhower, America adopted a more cautious wait-and-see policy, which gave way in the late 1950s, with the launching of the Soviet Sputnik, to a period of heightened military competition. The Kennedy administration returned to a policy of strict containment, which led to confrontation between the superpowers over the basing of Soviet missiles in Cuba.

Having moved to the very brink of nuclear confrontation, leaders of both nations were sufficiently frightened to begin searching for new ways to reduce international tensions. The result was a relaxation of tensions with the Soviets that began in the Johnson administration, and reached its heyday in the Nixon administration with the policy of detente that was formulated by Henry Kissinger.

In the 1970s, a series of conflicts and misunderstandings eroded the spirit of detente. The hope of a further reduction in tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union was shattered in 1979 when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Subsequently, President Carter withdrew the SALT II arms agree-

Reuters/Bettman Newsphotos

In April, soon after Mikhail Gorbachev was installed as the new Kremlin leader, Speaker of the House Thomas P. O'Neill headed a congressional visit to Moscow, to discuss arms control.

ment from the Senate, led a 60-nation boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics, and canceled many of the trade and cultural agreements between the two nations. In the early 1980s, as President Reagan took an avowedly anti-Soviet stance, relations between the superpowers got even worse.

Containment and Accommodation

Over the past 40 years, American policy toward the Soviets has oscillated between two quite different positions, and much of the debate in this country about how we should relate to the Soviet Union has taken place between these positions. Everyone acknowledges the dangers of nuclear confrontation and the importance of avoiding it. But people proceed from contrasting perceptions of the Soviets which lead to quite different conclusions about the rules according to which relations between the superpowers should be conducted.

Some take a pessimistic view of the Soviets, their capabilities and their intentions. Convinced that the Soviet Union is an evil and aggressive power bent on world domination, they feel that the only prudent response is US military superiority and a policy which hobbles the Soviet economy while frustrating their global ambitions.

While not denying the fundamental differences between the two nations, others feel that it is both misleading and foolhardy to attribute unremittingly hostile motives to the Soviets. In their view, economic coercion and a drive for military superiority are likely to provoke the Soviets. A more prudent policy, they believe, would be to broaden relations with the Soviets on various fronts, to deal with them pragmatically as a regime with which we happen to have serious differences.

"We can no longer permit this great conflict of outlook and opinion to go on unreconciled... We can no longer carry on safely or effectively with the Soviet Union without the creation of a wider consensus."

—George Kennan

These views represent quite different perceptions of the conflict with the Soviets. On a wide range of issues — from US aid to Nicaraguan "freedom fighters" to the question of what missiles are necessary to protect the nation's security, from questions of trade policy with the Soviets to cultural exchanges — advocates of these views differ about what policies are in the nation's best interest.

Whatever the merits of these views of the Soviets, the very difference between them is in itself cause for concern, and an obstacle to reaching a consensus on foreign policy. Commenting several years ago on this situation, George Kennan, former US ambassador to Moscow, said that "we can no longer permit this great conflict of outlook and opinion to go on unreconciled. . . .We can no longer carry on safely or effectively with the Soviet Union without the creation of a wider consensus." On several occasions, Kennan has remarked that American perceptions of the Soviets are dangerously inaccurate. Criticizing the harsh anti-Soviet rhetoric that was characteristic of President Reagan's first term, he said, "I find the view of the Soviet Union that prevails today so extreme, so far removed from what any sober scrutiny of reality would reveal that it is not only inef-

fective but dangerous as a guide to political action."

Who then *are* the Soviets? If we risk misperceiving them from one direction by regarding them as unremittingly evil, there are equally serious distortions in regarding them as people who are "just like us." Vast differences in culture, history, and political values separate the Soviet system from our own, and pose a real obstacle to mutual understanding.

That was Henry Kissinger's point when he said: "The Soviet Union is not a mirror image of the United States. It operates on a different philosophy and according to different incentives. Citizens concerned about peace ought to understand first how a Marxist thinks — and how different that is from the way *we* think."

Three Questions

So this is our task, to reconsider the rules according to which the United States relates to the Soviet Union by taking a closer look at the Soviets. In this issue book we will examine options for relating to the Soviets in three separate spheres.

The first question is how to respond to the Soviet Union as a world power determined to expand its influence and its Marxist ideology. As illustrated by bitter congressional debate over aid to the Nicaraguan rebels, the *contras*, there are real differences about whether the United States has an obligation to resist Soviet-influenced regimes, wherever they may be. On another level, this debate illustrates quite different ways of thinking about the Soviet threat, and contrasting views of what the American response should be.

The second question is how the United States should relate to the Soviets in the realm of international trade, scientific and cultural exchanges — the routine business conducted between nations. Here, too, thoughtful people disagree about the best course of action. Some feel that most trade and cultural exchanges are a bad bargain, that they amount to aiding the enemy by propping up the Soviet system. Others insist that the only prudent course is to pursue relations of various sorts with the Soviets, including expanded trade relationships. We will examine different perspectives and their implications by looking at such issues as the export of American technology, and at scientific and cultural exchanges.

The third question relates to the crucial matter of America's strategic forces. What is the role of military force in enhancing the nation's security? Do we risk tempting the Soviets with our weakness if we do not have a clear and consistent edge in weaponry? Or is the very insistence upon maintaining superior weapons systems a spur to the Soviets to develop and deploy additional weapons — and thus something that makes us less secure?

In each of these areas, differences about policy often come down to different judgments about the Soviets. So this is where we start, with contrasting perspectives on the Soviets and their global ambitions.

"The superpowers often behave like two heavily armed blind men feeling their way around a room, each believing himself in mortal peril from the other whom he assumes to have perfect vision. Each tends to ascribe to the other a consistency, foresight and coherence that its own experience belies. Of course, over time, even two blind men can do enormous damage to each other, not to speak of the room."

—Henry Kissinger

2

Regional Conflicts, Global Ambitions

"The situation in Nicaragua poses a question that has arisen repeatedly over the past 40 years. How should the United States respond to Soviet influence throughout the world?"

In February, President Reagan went to the public to make the case for US action to counter what he depicted as a direct threat to American interests. His concern was for the situation in Nicaragua, and a regime that he characterized as "totalitarian, brutal and cruel." In his radio address, the President called on Congress to approve $14 million in military aid for Nicaraguan rebels called *contras*, who are committed to overthrowing the Sandinista regime.

That request provoked a storm of congressional criticism. The issue wasn't the amount that the President requested. This country spends more than that in aid to many countries. The dispute was over something else — how the United States should respond to Soviet influence and to regimes that are sympathetic to Communism.

From one perspective, what has been happening in Nicaragua might be regarded as a matter of little importance to Americans. This Central American nation is, after all, a tiny republic of about three million people. With a relatively modest army of 40,000, and no modern combat aircraft, it poses no direct threat to the United States.

Yet many agree with the President's assessment that Americans must be concerned about what is happening in Nicaragua, and not simply because it is just 1,000 miles from our border. The real concern is that some of the Sandinista leaders are avowed Marxists, trained in Cuba and sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Under their influence, Nicaragua might become a base for Soviet political and military activities in the region — in the President's words, a "beachhead for Communism in Central America." The heart of the matter, in Nicaragua and elsewhere where there is evidence of Soviet influence, is whether the United States should respond — and, if so, how? That has been one of the persistent foreign policy questions throughout the postwar era.

Containing the Soviets

Winston Churchill first used the phrase "iron curtain" in 1946 to refer to Soviet domination of other countries. It was an apt description, because when the Soviets took control, those countries were effectively cut off from the West. World War II was hardly over when the Soviets pulled the iron curtain around six Eastern European nations, and justified that action as a security measure. Clearly unhappy with Soviet domination, the people of several Eastern European nations have risen up against it. To maintain control, the Soviets have resorted when necessary to armed intervention. This happened in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. More recently, the Polish Solidarity movement was suppressed by the imposition of martial law.

One of the chief objectives of American foreign policy since World War II has been to contain Soviet ambitions. In the words of George Kennan, who formulated the policy of containment during the Truman administration, we should "con-

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There are real differences not only about the extent of Cuban and Soviet involvement in the Sandinista regime, but also about how the United States should respond.

front the Russians with counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." The goal of such a policy is to frustrate the Soviet Union's ambitions, leading eventually — as Kennan saw it — to the breakup of the Soviet empire or the "gradual mellowing of Soviet power."

The concern of the Truman administration was to contain Soviet power and influence in Greece and Turkey. The Eisenhower administration was concerned about containing Soviet influence in the Middle East. With John F. Kennedy's pledge to "bear any burden. . . . to assure the success of liberty," containment policy reached its most expansive stage. Yet with Vietnam, the consensus that formerly supported containment collapsed. Consequently, the makers of American foreign policy turned away from containment in the mid-1970s and toward a policy of improving US-Soviet relations. The goal of detente, as Henry Kissinger saw it, was not the cultivation of friendship with the Soviets, but the more modest objective of "mitigating conflict among adversaries," thus enabling both nations to continue negotiations.

If the intention of that policy was to restrain the Soviet Union's global ambitions, many now regard it as a failure. For the Soviets continued to extend their influence, mainly through the use of proxy forces. In the name of supporting "wars of national liberation," the Soviet Union and its proxies have supplied money, arms, and military training to overthrow non-Communist governments. One Soviet proxy is Communist Vietnam, the dominant power in Southeast Asia. In a war supported by the Soviets, Vietnam occupied Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) and installed a puppet regime. In Africa, the Soviets have proxies in the Marxist regimes of Ethiopia and Angola, which came to power through Cuban- and Soviet-sponsored military movements in the 1970s. In the western hemisphere, the Soviets gained a foothold in Cuba in the early 1960s, and continue to support that regime at the rate of $11 million a day.

Despite Soviet advances, Congress has been reluctant since the war in Vietnam to aid anti-Marxist efforts. It did approve the shipment of arms to Afghan rebels during the Carter administration, and offered economic assistance to the non-Communist resistance in Kampuchea. But since the Vietnam conflict, Congress has not sent American troops to fight against Communist forces.

From this perspective, the aid that President Reagan has been seeking for the *contras* in Nicaragua has a special significance. It is an attempt to shake off the pessimism engendered by Vietnam. It represents the assertion of a more active opposition to Marxist regimes supported directly or indirectly by the Soviet Union.

The Case for Opposing Marxist Regimes

The case for a more aggressive role in opposing Marxist regimes begins with a certain perception of the Soviets and their intentions. People who advocate this perspective are convinced that if the Soviets have resorted to expansion by proxy, this is simply a different means of carrying out their long-standing commitment to global expansion.

For those who believe that Soviet ambitions have slack-

ened, hard-liners point to the events in Afghanistan as proof to the contrary. When the Soviets entered Afghanistan in 1979, it was on the pretext of "restoring order" out of political turmoil. In fact, the Soviets instituted a puppet regime and have since created a new political order in the Soviet image. The brutality of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan over the past six years is remarkable even by Soviet standards, as witnessed by numerous accounts of Soviet atrocities. To those who favor a hard-line approach, the Soviet Union's geopolitical ambitions and its habit of denying even the pretense of self-determination make its every move a potential threat to American interests.

There is a lesson, they argue, in the events of the past 40 years, one that was first demonstrated in Eastern Europe and more recently in Afghanistan. When the iron curtain comes down on a particular country, it does not rise again. This is the essence of the Brezhnev doctrine that was proclaimed at the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Soviets regard any victory for Communism as irreversible. Once a nation is in their camp, the Soviets do what is necessary to keep it there.

Some feel that justice requires American intervention whenever Third World nations are about to fall under Soviet domination. Sooner or later, all countries in the Soviet bloc meet the same fate: personal liberties are sharply curtailed, political self-determination is denied, and political repression is commonplace. The people who take this position feel that in Nicaragua this process is already under way. While the Sandinistas have not yet turned Nicaragua into a totalitarian state, there is an extensive network of internal espionage: dissidents are attacked by government-organized mobs; and food rationing is used as an instrument of state control. This is a chilling glimpse of the future that the Sandinistas have in store for Nicaragua.

Is there, then, no alternative for Americans except to resign ourselves to an inexorable increase in the number of Communist nations? Hard-liners respond with a clear and simple answer. As the leader of the free world, America must actively resist the Soviet Union's efforts — in Central America and elsewhere — to extend its global influence.

In his radio address in February, President Reagan justified support for the *contras* in moral terms: "Our support for the freedom fighters is morally right and intimately linked to our own security." The President wanted it to be clearly understood that "if we fail to meet this obligation. . . .we will have sent an unmistakable signal that the greatest power in the world is unwilling and incapable of stopping Communist aggression in our own backyard."

If we don't like the idea of sending American troops abroad to keep Communism at bay, we have the alternative of assisting surrogates who can do the job. Since the *contras* provide a native anti-Communist force, American support of their efforts provides another means of countering the Soviets.

At the heart of the debate over Nicaragua is whether the United States should encourage the overthrow of Communist governments where we can. Hard-liners believe that political independence is not something that must be unconditionally accepted. While the United States is not justified in overthrowing any government it dislikes, it is justified in helping to overthrow a government which violates the personal and political freedoms of its own people, and threatens to assist Communist subversion throughout an entire region.

The Case against Intervention

Reasonable people differ on many issues, but differences are rarely as stark as they are in this instance. While some leaders look at the situation in Nicaragua and see the threat of a regime as aggressive as the Nazis, others see more similarities to Vietnam. Haven't we had enough, they ask, of undeclared wars against "enemies" we cannot defeat, with people for whom a Marxist government promises a better life, in regional conflicts we should never have entered? Didn't we learn anything from Vietnam?

If hard-liners feel that America is obliged to resist a Marxist regime in Nicaragua, others feel just as strongly that the United States is morally as well as legally obliged not to intervene to overthrow the Sandinista regime. This was Texas Representative Jim Wright's point in February 1985 when he replied to the Administration by saying, "I don't think we have any call to appoint ourselves as God's avenging angels and reform by force any government with which we disagree."

There are several reasons why any nation should hesitate before contemplating the overthrow of a legally constituted government. As those who oppose aid to the *contras* point out, it violates the very principle of self-determination. If international law stands for anything, it stands for the idea that sovereignty is sacred. By definition, rebel forces such as the *contras* are not sovereign. As much as we might dislike the Sandinista government, it is a sovereign regime that enjoys broad public support.

Opponents of intervention in Central America point out that it would be ironic and unfortunate if, in the name of countering Soviet influence, the United States started to mimic that nation's habit of disregarding national sovereignty whenever it chooses to do so. The United States must be true to its principles, its commitment to freedom and pluralism. We have no right to impose on Nicaragua our conception of the kind of government that country should have. Indeed, this principle is explicitly stated in the charter of the Organization of American States, which US representatives signed in 1948: "No state or group of states has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external relations of any other state." Opponents of intervention regard support for the *contras* as a violation of that principle. Having the power

American and Soviet Interventions since World War II

This is a partial list of Soviet and American actions since 1945 in which one of the superpowers used its troops or other influence to affect the fate of a foreign government.

Soviet interventions:

1945-1948: Wartime occupation of Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia results in Communist parties coming to power. Bulgaria and Romania also become part of the Soviet bloc.

1950-1953: Aid to North Korea in its war against UN troops led by the US.

1956: Invasion of Hungary to crush uprising against Communist regime.

1968: Invasion of Czechoslovakia to overthrow Dubcek regime, which had sought trade and closer relations with Western countries.

1974-1975: Soviet funds channeled through Cuba are instrumental in the Marxist takeover in Angola.

1975: Military aid to North Vietnam allows Hanoi to overthrow the government in Saigon, thus unifying Vietnam under Communist control.

1978: Aid to Vietnam allows the invasion of Kampuchea (Cambodia) and the overthrow of the pro-Chinese Khmer Rouge.

1979: Invasion of Afghanistan and installation of pro-Moscow government.

American interventions:

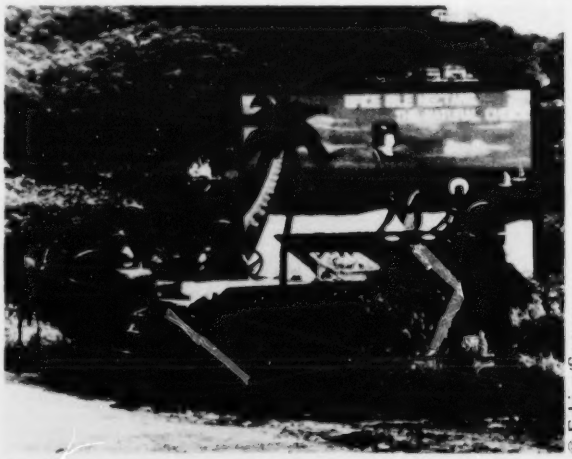
1947: Aid to right-wing Greek government helps to defeat Communist insurgency.

1950: The US interposes its Seventh Fleet between Taiwan and mainland China to support Chiang Kai-shek, who had fled the mainland.

1950-1953: The US leads the fight against Communist North Korea.

1950-1956: The US supports and fights in the French colonial war against Vietnamese Communists.

1953: The CIA assists in the overthrow of the government of Iran; the Shah comes to power.



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In 1983, US troops were sent to the Caribbean island of Grenada to prevent a Marxist takeover.

1954: The CIA instigates the overthrow of the democratic nationalist Guatemalan government and installs a right-wing military regime.

1958: Troops are sent into Lebanon in order to intimidate the opposition to the current regime.

1960-1964: US aid and CIA involvement contribute to the defeat of nationalism in the Congo and the accession of a government that represents the interests of Belgium, the Congo's former colonial master.

1961: The Bay of Pigs: US provides aid, training, and air support to an army which fails in its attempt to overthrow the Castro government in Cuba.

1963: CIA undermines the government in British Guiana on the ground that it is sympathetic to Marxism.

1964-1975: US involvement in the Vietnam War.

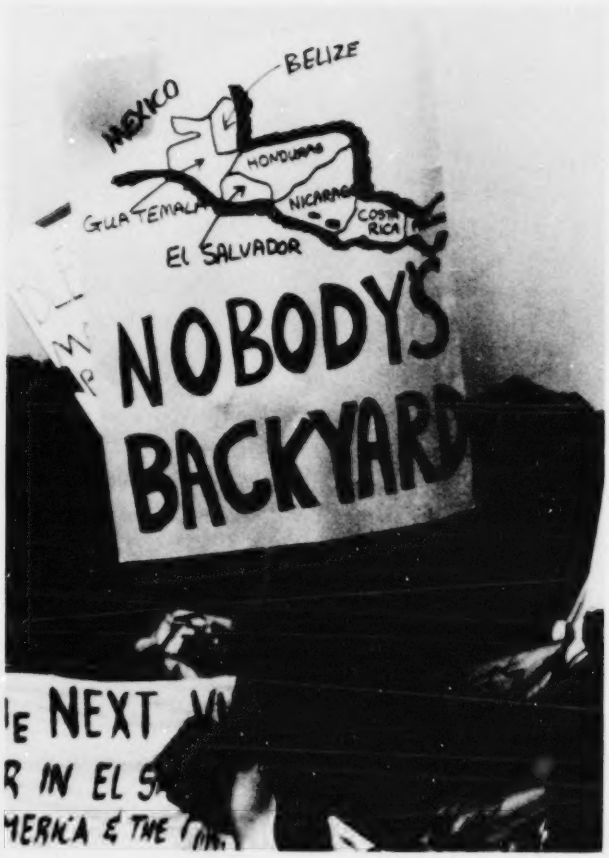
1965: Troops land in the Dominican Republic to prevent a left-wing government from coming to power.

1967: The CIA and other US agencies assist in a coup in Greece.

1973: US aid leads to overthrow of Chile's president and the institution of a military dictatorship.

1983: American soldiers invade Grenada to prevent a Marxist takeover.

1984: US aid to El Salvador makes possible the election of President Jose Napoleon Duarte.



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US efforts to stop the spread of Communist influence in Central America have sparked protest at home and abroad.

"We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty."

—John F. Kennedy

to quash another government does not give us the right to use it.

Moreover, assisting the *contras* in their anti-Communist efforts puts us in league with forces that are no better than the ones we oppose. Fighting a war by proxy may be more comfortable to many Americans than sending our troops to do the job, but it does not relieve us of the responsibility for what American-supported forces do. Reliable reports confirm the atrocities committed by the *contras* — atrocities which include killing innocent civilians, torturing prisoners, and threatening people who will not fight on their side.

One of the chief concerns of those who oppose intervention is that in the name of protecting personal liberty and the right to political self-determination we are negating those very values. Many of the *contra* leaders — including Colonel Enrique Bermudez, commander of the *contras* — were officials in the Somoza regime that was overthrown in 1979 by the Sandinistas. Very few Americans today would defend that authoritarian regime. Yet by subsidizing the *contras*, we back some of the same officials who were part of a regime that was widely regarded as inept and corrupt.

Some Americans who oppose aid to the *contras* are inclined to agree with Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, who insists that the very presence of US-backed rebel forces in Nicaragua is the chief reason why his regime has been forced to seek assistance from socialist countries. Our very efforts to keep Central America from succumbing to Marxism may be driving Nicaragua into the arms of the Soviets.

Indeed, some are convinced that the habit of looking for Soviet influence in Third World nations such as Nicaragua leads to a dangerously oversimplified view of the world. It may actually create enemies where we could find friends. In the course of the 1980 campaign, Mr. Reagan told reporters that "the Soviet Union underlies all the unrest that is going on. If they weren't engaged in this game of dominoes, there wouldn't be any hot spots in the world." That, many people believe, hardly does justice to the situation in most Third World nations. It is worth considering the possibility that the turmoil in Nicaragua, as in many Third World nations, is not mainly the result of Soviet agitations. Rather, what is happening there reflects the attempt of a nation unaccustomed to democratic government to work out its political destiny.

Misperceiving the Soviets

Critics of a hard anti-Communist line in dealing with regimes such as the Sandinistas feel that people who take that position seriously misread not just the Sandinistas, but the Soviet Union itself. They argue that the Soviets are neither able nor eager to carry out an ambitious program of world domination. The Soviets' ability to control events beyond their own borders is quite limited; their faltering domestic economy does not allow them to sustain an ambitious global agenda.

The Soviets in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is different from other places where the Soviet Union has tried to exert its control. The greatest difference may be the extent of the opposition within the country and, correspondingly, the degree of brutality being used to stamp it out. The failure of the Soviets to gain firm control of territory outside of the major cities led to an intensification of the military effort and in turn to what appears to be an intentional effort to depopulate the countryside.

Peshawar, a dusty frontier city in northern Pakistan, is a place full of terrible stories these days. There is, for example, the tale of Mohammed Qasim Yusufi, a soft-spoken, 33-year-old former professor of agriculture at Kabul University, in neighboring Afghanistan, whose experience aptly sums up the disastrous events in his country since the Soviet Union invaded it on Dec. 27, 1979.

Mr. Yusufi felt, after several years of life under what the Afghans officially call the *Saur*, or April Revolution, that life had become untenable, so he decided to get out. He decided to pay a final visit to his native village, a place called Behsoud, on his way into exile. "If you go to my village," he said, "you will see that it has been destroyed. You won't find more than five families there. The village has been terribly bombed."

Behsoud's condition is shared by many, perhaps most, villages in Afghanistan, Mr. Yusufi and other Afghan refugees contend. The Soviet Union, in its efforts to weaken support for the *mujahedeen*—the anti-Soviet resistance fighters—has started intense aerial bombardments of rural areas. The United Nations Human Rights Commission said in a recent report that the Soviet strategy is aimed apparently at forcibly evacuating large stretches of countryside. The policy has left an unknown number dead or displaced and created havoc in Afghan agriculture.

Taken individually, perhaps, stories like that of Mohammed Qasim Yusufi are not of staggering dimensions. Taken together, however, the stories suggest that Soviet policy in Afghanistan is as audacious and ruthless as any the Russians have ever carried out in their satellite states.

According to one Afghan refugee, in major urban areas of the country, Soviet-style institutions are already well established. He has a long list of them: the propaganda machinery, the state-controlled newspapers, the professional associations, the branches of the Communist party in every neighborhood, office, and school. There is also, of course, the secret police, modeled on the KGB. Soviet advisers have been placed at every level of government. The school system, from kindergartens to universities, has been revamped. Thousands of young people are sent to the Soviet Union for their educations.

The Soviet advisers began, in 1979, to distribute teaching materials that had been translated directly from Russian texts. A history of the new Afghanistan was drafted by Soviet scholars in Moscow and then translated into the Afghan languages. The new history stressed two themes: that Afghanistan's history is dominated by the struggle of the working classes against "imperialism," and that the country's independence is largely owed to the "fraternal assistance" of the Soviet Union. The Afghanistan that emerges in the refugees' accounts is a country not simply being subdued militarily by the Soviet Union but being remade in the Russians' own totalitarian image.

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It is important to recognize, as critics of the hard-line position point out, that whatever the imperialist ambitions of Marxist-Leninist ideology, Soviet leaders are cautious and pragmatic. Their primary concern is not world conquest, or even the more modest project of extending their influence throughout the world, but rather the immediate task of consolidating their political power and rebuilding a shaky domestic economy.

People who advocate a path of accommodation view the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe not as the first stage in a plan of global domination, but as the spoils of World War II. Rather than regarding the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe as a sign of aggressive intentions, they feel that the construction of an extended iron curtain was motivated mainly by defensive considerations, and the Soviet Union's desire to protect itself against foreign aggressors.

Outside of Eastern Europe, the Soviets did not use their troops on foreign soil again until the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. It is arguable that since Afghanistan adjoins a border where the Soviets feel vulnerable to the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, that action was motivated largely by defensive considerations. In Afghanistan, the Soviets installed a regime sympathetic to their own, which is a motive that this country should recognize. This is essentially what we tried to do in Vietnam, where our goal was to install a regime that supported American interests.

Over the past 40 years, the United States has resorted to military actions abroad more frequently than has the Soviet Union. The United States sent forces into Korea, Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam. Most recently, the United States sent forces into Grenada, an action that was justified in

"There is a great deal of self-doubt, a lack of national confidence about our role in the world and how we should wield power."

—Representative Dick Cheney (R-Wyo.)

the name of protecting a small and vulnerable Caribbean government against Cuban-assisted subversion.

Part of the problem, from the view of those advocating accommodation with the Soviets, is caused by the lens through which we view Soviet actions. Since we believe in the righteousness of our own cause, we reserve the right to intervene in other nations' affairs in order to provide an opportunity for those values in other nations. But when the Soviets do the same thing, directly or indirectly, we regard it as evidence of a worldwide plan of domination. For their part, the Soviets — who regard their nation as the guardian of the world revolution — impute similar meanings to our actions. Their perceptions and fears of us mirror ours of them, fueling a spiraling conflict.

When to Intervene

So there are contrasting views of the Soviets' global intentions, distinctive ways of assessing the Communist threat. Convinced that the Soviet Union has not altered its long-held goal of world domination, and even that the scope and sophistication of that campaign has accelerated, some feel that the only prudent response is to counter Soviet influence at each turn — and to assist in the overthrow of Marxist governments when possible.

Critics of that view reply that while the United States has an obligation — in John Kennedy's words — to "help make the world safe for diversity," we would be well advised to stay out of regional conflicts where nations are working out their own political destiny. The best way to carry out our obligation is not to rely chiefly on military means to counter Soviet influence. In deciding whether to intervene in Third World nations to halt the spread of Soviet influence, we should ask first whether American interests are sufficiently threatened to justify intervention. In particular, we should be sensitive to the possibility that such intervention may be destructive to the very values in whose name the action was justified. But in any case, diversity is what we stand for. There is room for different beliefs and different systems of government. Especially at a time when Marxism is losing much of the appeal it once had, there is no reason to feel threatened by a Marxist regime in Nicaragua.

In the early months of Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure as head of the Soviet state, the partisans of these positions examined his statements for evidence of Soviet intentions. While indicating his desire to concentrate on economic problems within the USSR, Gorbachev also said in his inaugural speech to the Politburo Central Committee that he is determined to "enhance cooperation with socialist states, and to enhance the role and influence of socialism in world affairs." Whatever else may change as a result of Gorbachev's accession to power, the implications of the Soviet Union's commitment to world Communism will remain a fundamental question for Americans to debate.

3

Trading with the Soviets

"Despite hostilities, we carry on relations of various kinds with the Soviets. Is it in our interest to broaden the range of contacts by expanding trade and cultural exchange?"

While US efforts to respond to Soviet influence in Afghanistan and Central America capture the headlines, there are equally divisive questions about trade policy, technology transfer, and cultural exchange with the Soviets that typically do not command much public attention. Relations with the Soviets in these areas are less apt to be in the news because they are the kinds of "normal" relations that routinely take place among nations.

Despite tensions and hostilities with the Soviets, we carry on a surprisingly broad range of contacts with the USSR. Imports and exports with the Soviets amounted to about $4 billion last year. By agreement with our government, Soviet fishermen take 50,000 tons of catch out of American waters each year. Agreements for official US-Soviet exchanges exist in various areas, including agriculture, medical science, and public health.

However, because of the unusual nature of the US-Soviet relationship, transactions of the sort that take place routinely among other nations are often far from routine when they take place between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Pipeline Diplomacy

Consider, for example, the tensions that arose several years ago over the construction of a Soviet gas pipeline from western Siberia to Western Europe. Concerned about the spread of Soviet influence in Western Europe, the Reagan administration took various measures to hobble the project. It suspended the license of the Caterpillar Tractor Company to sell pipe-laying vehicles to the Soviet Union, and prohibited General Electric from exporting turbines intended for use in the pipeline's compressor stations. And it exerted strong pressure on the European nations that were participating in the project to reconsider their role and withdraw their support.

Those actions were motivated by the Administration's belief that withholding Western technology and equipment from the project would further weaken an already shaky Soviet economy, and at the same time force Moscow to take a more moderate stand in Poland and on other international issues.

Yet this strategy of economic warfare against the Soviet Union backfired. When American firms were forced to cancel their contracts, the Soviets turned to Japanese and European manufacturers for their needs. America's European allies — angry at the United States for presuming to tell them with whom they should be doing business — went ahead with the project, and profited from it.

Far from achieving its intended goal, America's pipeline policy spurred Soviet efforts to complete the pipeline on schedule. The policy blocked the opportunities that the project offered for businesses in this country; it stirred up animosities with several of our European allies; and it created further mistrust between us and the Russians, who are now more reluctant to make contracts with American businessmen for fear that contracts will once again be broken.

H. Clay Bennett/*St. Pete[illegible]burg Times*

Economic Warfare

As tensions mounted between the two nations in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Washington restricted the export not only of gas pipeline equipment, but also of computers, steel-making equipment, and tools used in diesel assembly lines. The goal of American policy was economic coercion, to respond to Soviet aggression with something stronger than rhetoric but less threatening than military action.

However, many regard this policy as futile and self-defeating. They feel that since the Soviets turn to other countries for goods that American manufacturers will not supply to them, the main effect of such trade restrictions is the damage they inflict on American business.

There is controversy even in the area of cultural and scientific exchange. The Carter and Reagan administrations tried to restrict not only the flow of goods but also the flow of knowledge between the US and the USSR. For example, in conferences held in 1980 and 1982 on magnetic memory and optics — two topics with possible military applications — the government pressed for restrictions on who would attend as well as the topics that would be discussed, and that action touched off a storm of protest. Many scientists felt that the action impinged on academic freedom.

It is particularly important now to reconsider how we should relate to the Soviets in these respects, because a new round of high-level trade negotiations has been taking place since May 1985. The purpose of these negotiations — the first high-level negotiations in this area since relations turned sour after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 — is to discuss how trade might be expanded.

Currently, there are various restrictions on US-Soviet trade. In 1974, when it passed the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Congress denied to the Soviets most-favored-nation trade privileges, which provide for a general lowering of tariffs. The effect of that action was to impose heavy duties on Soviet imports — up to 100 percent in certain cases — as long as the Soviet government restricts the emigration of Jews. In 1980, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the United States canceled, or refused to renegotiate, exchange agreements with the Soviet Union in such areas as science and technology, energy, and commerce. In fact, the volume of US-Soviet trade dropped by half in 1980, and has yet to return to its former level.

Both Moscow and Washington are now reviewing their trade policies, and reconsidering the commercial connection between the two nations. Almost certainly, the Soviets want it to be broadened. Soviet Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Alexei Mazhulo said in April that trade with the US could reach $10 billion, almost three times its current annual level. The question for the United States — which has far more to offer than the Soviets offer to us — is what benefit there might be for the United States in broadening that commercial connection.

Considering our adversarial relationship with the Russians, how should economic relations with the Soviet Union be regarded? Here, too, as in other areas of the US-Soviet relationship, there are sharp differences about how American interests should be defined.

Lowering the Trade Barriers

Many people, including the executives of some of this nation's largest firms, are eager to lower trade barriers and to expand the commercial connection between the US and the Soviet Union. Dwayne Andreas, chief executive officer of the Archer-Daniels-Midland Company, one of the largest processors and traders of corn, soybeans, and wheat, has been actively pushing for greater exports to the Soviet Union. In his words: "The Russians are doing $40 billion in business a year with Western Europe and $3 billion with us, so I would say there's an enormous potential to improve upon that."

While Soviet trade is a relatively small item for the American economy as a whole, it means a lot not only to the grain industry but also to some manufacturing firms. For example, before the embargo was placed on Caterpillar Tractor's pipeline-laying machines, the Soviet Union was Caterpillar's largest market for that product.

So why not expand the trade connection with the Soviets? Many people point to the failure of economic coercion regarding the Soviet pipeline, and conclude that economic sanctions simply aren't effective. The Soviet Union has alternative suppliers of most of the goods they import. Besides, applying such measures only heightens tensions with the Russians.

There is no question that we can help ourselves economically by expanding the sale of produce and products to the Soviet Union, but the profit motive should not be our only reason to do so. Senator Charles Mathias (R-Md.) is one of the advocates of expanding commerce with the Soviet Union — but he advocates doing so with a clear sense of how trade can be used to dissipate tension with the Soviets. "To contain Soviet power," as Mathias wrote, "we should not isolate ourselves from Soviet society but should seek instead to engage it in the most varied ways on the widest of fronts. By addressing a militaristic society only on the strongest ground it occupies, we limit the influence we can have. By exploring other subjects, even marginal ones, we can reduce some of the tension at the center."

Many people agree with Mathias that trade and other contacts with the Soviet Union provide an important channel for US-Soviet relations. Quite apart from the material benefits of trade, and other sorts of exchange with the Soviets, these relations also allow constructive contact between the American and the Soviet people — something that has not happened often over the past 40 years. Such exchanges allow Americans to get to know the people on the other side of this conflict. Just as important, they expose the Soviet people to Americans, our culture and products.

The promise of broadening trade relations with the Soviets is that it may, over time, open closed doors and closed minds. To demonstrate its potential, proponents of freer trade point to what has happened as a result of expanded trade with China. Several years ago, that country's leaders opened what was formerly an economy closed to Western products. Not coincidentally, as Western products and influences have become more prominent in China, the regime has begun to incorporate Western economic practices into its own policy. Relations between China and the United States, which were strained until just a few years ago, are now far more cordial. While the same result is by no means guaranteed in the Soviet Union, this is still a path worth pursuing.

Citizen Diplomacy

Those who advocate accommodation with the Soviets feel that just as relations with them would benefit by freer trade, so also would there be benefits from more open exchanges in science, education, culture, and tourism. Many such exchanges took place in the 1970s, and most of the American participants judged them to be highly worthwhile.

In the realm of scientific exchange, for example, most of the American scientists who have been involved in such efforts regard them as constructive on several levels. A survey conducted in 1977 by the National Academy of Sciences found, for example, that 60 percent of the participants felt that the US "gains a lot scientifically" from such exchanges; 80 percent agreed that visiting Soviet scientists "suggested new research procedures and introduced new ideas," and 84 percent agreed that there should be more joint US-Soviet research. The review panel concluded that "although American science is, on the whole, stronger than Soviet science, there is still a genuine scientific gain for the United States in having such exchanges. . . . Even in those fields where the United States teaches more than it learns, it is important for Americans to know what the Soviets are doing."

There is reason to be similarly optimistic about cultural exchanges. Even when official relations between the two countries are not unusually strained, these unofficial contacts are a valuable way of increasing understanding between American and Soviet citizens. When official relations are strained, as they have been since 1979, citizen diplomacy has offered virtually the only nonhostile contact between the two nations.

In visits to the Soviet Union over the past few years, many Americans have been received with warmth and curiosity by Soviet citizens. On occasion, visitors have been greeted by a surprising openness on the part of Soviet officials. Several years ago, the American Academy of Sciences — a nongovernmental group — petitioned the Soviet government on behalf of dissident physicist Andrei Sakharov. Subsequent reports indicated that the treatment he received improved as a result.

Those who advocate accommodation with the Soviets believe that there are several reasons for pursuing a broad range of contacts with them. In the words of Senator Mathias: "We should acknowledge that we need contacts with a widening

range of Soviets simply for the insights we can gain through them into their system and the course it is taking. We need such social and political intelligence, far beyond what our diplomats can gather on their restricted rounds, because we need to understand the USSR well enough to deal with it steadily."

A More Realistic Policy

Yet there are others who point out that generous sentiments don't necessarily lead to a realistic definition of this nation's self-interest, and they advocate a different course. We do not, after all, have anything resembling normal relations with the Soviets, and we cannot afford to forget for a moment who we are dealing with. In this view, the real question is whether Americans are willing to face the uncomfortable truth about the Soviets, and to choose a realistic path that puts this nation's security above all else.

If nothing else were at stake, they say, we could allow the profit motive to determine our course, and expand trade with the Soviets. But in this case the profit motive is dangerously inadequate as a guide to the nation's self-interest. In the words of Midge Decter, an advocate of containment: "Economic policy should be subservient to the political and security needs of the nation, as painful as that might be to certain sectors of our society. I think the business community has been behaving badly and — from a long-term point of view — stupidly, in relation to the Soviet Union. While I am for a free market, the security interests of the nation cannot be sacrificed to short-term business interests."

"To contain Soviet power, we should not isolate ourselves from Soviet society, but should seek instead to engage it in the most varied ways on the widest of fronts."

—Senator Charles Mathias (R-Md.)

What, then, should we do? To those who take this view, it is essential first to recognize that, for all of the Russian military might, their economy is in crisis. It cannot supply some of that nation's essential consumer needs. The Soviet economy has never been self-sufficient, and today it is less so than ever. The nation is dependent upon imported goods in many sectors.

From that perception, certain things follow about how the United States should relate to the Soviet Union. We would like to influence Soviet policy, but have few means to do so. Resorting to military threats has the severe drawback of tempting war, and there are real limits to the political pressures we can bring to bear on the Soviets. But precisely because the Soviet economy is so vulnerable, economic sanctions are likely to be effective. The influx of American goods ranging from grain to the newest technologies amounts to economic assistance to the Soviet regime. It bolsters the Soviet regime by making it possible for that nation's leaders to consolidate their strength.

What advocates of freer trade tend to forget is that the Soviet economy is basically a war economy. Military mobilization is the nation's top priority. Much of what the Soviets import serves the regime's military purposes. For this reason, hard-liners are particularly concerned about exporting American technology, especially in computer science, microtechnol-

The Olympics: Political Enmity and Athletic Rivalry

Of the various exchanges that take place among nations, few are as compelling as the Olympic Games. These games symbolize the ideal of friendly competition among nations. What happened in 1980 and 1984 illustrates how complicated even a "friendly competition" can become between two nations with deep political differences.

Few countries take participation in the Olympics as seriously as the United States and the Soviet Union. The importance that Moscow attaches to the Olympic competition was clearly demonstrated in the mid-1970s, when the USSR made a bid to the International Olympic Committee to choose Moscow as the site of the 1980 summer games. The Soviets announced that they would spend some $300 million to build housing and athletic facilities and improve communications and transportation facilities to the Olympic site. The Soviet bid was accepted, making the 1980 Olympics the first to be held in a Communist nation.

Then, in 1979, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance appealed to the International Olympic Committee to change the site of the games, but the committee refused. In March 1980 President Carter announced that the US would boycott the Moscow games as a way of protesting Soviet actions, and he urged other nations to do likewise. Finally, more than 60 nations observed the boycott.

Soviet leaders reacted angrily to the American action. They were particularly offended by President Carter's comparison of the Moscow Olympics to Hitler's 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Soviet leaders argued that political disagreements had not previously kept nations from competing with one another in the Olympics. Sergei Pavlov, the chief Soviet sports official, said that when discussions took place about the winter Olympics in Lake Placid, American forces were in Vietnam. Yet the Soviets threatened no boycott, and the winter Olympics went ahead as scheduled.

At the time of America's 1980 boycott of the Moscow games, Soviet officials asserted that their teams would go to the 1984 summer Olympics in any case. But in 1984, as the Los Angeles games approached, international politics once again kept Soviet and American athletes from competing against one another. Tensions rose over several problems associated with travel and security arrangements. In March, the State Department refused to admit a Soviet advance man on the grounds that he was a KGB agent. Fearing the incidents that might take place in the politically unfriendly climate of southern California, the Soviets grew more concerned about the safety of their athletes and complained about security arrangements. The Soviets also protested what they regarded as the excessive commercialization of the Olympics. When they demanded a guarantee that no Soviet athlete who tried to defect would be given political asylum, American government officials refused. In May 1984 the Soviet government announced that that nation's athletes would not take part in the Los Angeles Olympics. Soon after, a dozen Socialist nations joined the boycott.

Jacques Langevin/Sygma

In 1984, rather than participating in the summer Olympics in Los Angeles, the Soviet Union staged an athletic competition among Eastern bloc countries called the "Friendship Games."

As a decision approaches about American participation in the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, the underlying question is likely to arise once again. Is it in this country's interest to participate in athletic competition with Soviet teams, regardless of the political enmity that exists between the two nations?

Tass from Sovfoto

American citizens continue to visit the USSR to participate in exchange programs, and to see the sights.

ogy, and telecommunications. All of our dealings with the Soviets should serve a single purpose, to weaken their regime. We should refrain in particular from anything that directly or indirectly strengthens their military effort.

Far from expanding American grain shipments to the Soviets, as some propose, people who take this position feel that further cutbacks in grain shipments would be well advised. If they were deprived of American grain, Soviet leaders would have to divert resources from other parts of their economy to agriculture. Some feel strongly that it is in our interest to get them to do just that.

If we choose not to cease trade with the Soviet Union entirely, we should at least regard trade as a powerful bargaining tool, and that calls for thoughtful coordination between our trade policy and our military and diplomatic policy. Over the long run, at least, trade sanctions do have an impact on the Soviets. Early this year, for example, Soviet officials hinted that they might allow freer Jewish emigration if the volume of US-Soviet trade increases. Because trade agreements can be used as a bargaining chip with the Soviets, we should be sure to get the maximum advantage out of any trade that does take place.

The Dubious Value of "Citizen Diplomacy"

Just as those who favor a harder line with the Soviets feel that we are often shortsighted in pursuing trading relations with the Soviets, they feel that we have been naive in our view of cultural exchange. Frequently characterized as a simple person-to-person encounter that brings "typical Americans" into contact with "typical Russians," most of the cultural exchange that takes place between the two nations is something else entirely.

Scientific exchanges, for example, come under attack from two directions. They are criticized on the ground that Soviets

use them as occasions for gathering useful scientific knowledge while giving in exchange little of value to American scientists. They are further criticized as an occasion for the Communist party to reward loyal bureaucrats and party members by allowing them to travel here to visit American universities and laboratories, thus making us partners in a system that reinforces the control of the Soviet regime.

As Arch Puddington, executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy, points out: "The Soviet Union is very careful in the selection of people that go on these exchanges. We are not. In fact, they are even selective in who may come from the US, so far as they reserve the right to delete from our delegations people whom they perceive as anti-Soviet." This heavy-handed control produces such travesties as 32-year-old Soviet "youth" showing up in undergraduate university exchanges, and scientific meetings attended by Soviet official hacks who know next to nothing about the topic of discussion. The Soviets' purpose in these exchanges is almost always intelligence-gathering. Since the Americans who take part in these exchanges are generally willing to share what they know, these exchanges often work to the Soviets' advantage.

Much the same is true of what is erroneously called "citizen diplomacy." The term implies that the Soviets who take part are ordinary citizens. But those citizens are hand-selected representatives of the party. What frequently happens when such groups of Soviets meet with Americans is that they issue a joint proclamation of peace. While well intended by the Americans, it happens that "peace" is the official Soviet line, which also blames the American government for the lack of peace. By endorsing such statements, Americans unwittingly denounce their own government and hand the Soviets a propaganda victory.

From a hard-line perspective, exchanges with the Soviets are worthwhile only when they yield clear gains for the United States. Otherwise, exchanges work to the disadvantage of this country, and give strength and credibility to the Soviet regime, thus heightening the danger it poses to the United States.

These two positions differ in their view of the Soviets, and also in their view of the conflict between the two nations. Supporters of accommodation feel that certain actions can be advantageous to both nations. From this perspective, trade and other exchanges provide modest but useful steps toward stable coexistence.

Advocates of containment take quite a different view. Since the Soviets are our adversaries, in every situation where the two nations meet, one side wins and the other loses. In this view, as long as the US takes part thoughtlessly in trade and cultural exchanges, America will lose because we give away more than we get. The only prudent course with the Soviets is to regard every occasion — even such apparently harmless occasions as cultural exchanges — as an opportunity for gaining an advantage over an implacable enemy.

"The security interests of the nation cannot be sacrificed to short-term business interests. I am opposed to all trade with the Soviet bloc. The most important thing we can do now is to stop helping the Soviets keep their regimes stable."

—Midge Decter

Aggressive Intentions, Defensive Reactions

"If we do not have a clear edge in the arms race, do we risk tempting the Soviets with our weakness? Or is the very insistence upon new American weapons dangerously destabilizing, something that makes us less secure?"

The conflict with the Soviets has many facets. In one respect, it is a conflict between fundamentally different economic and political systems. In another of its aspects, it is a competition for global influence and power. The problem of US-Soviet relations is further complicated by the awesome military apparatus which the United States and the Soviet Union have constructed, and the threat of wholesale destruction that it poses.

Recently, the whole matter of national security and arms control has been prominent in the news, and not just because of the resumption of arms talks in Geneva. Early in the summer of 1985, Congress once again took up the question of how many MX missiles should be deployed. The MX — a long-range missile that is both fast and accurate, with far more destructive power than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima — is a formidable addition to the nation's strategic forces. The Administration defends the MX not only on its merits as a weapon, but also as a "bargaining chip" for American negotiators at the arms talks. Members of Congress have been debating whether the US already possesses a sufficient retaliatory capacity, and whether the threat of additional MX missiles is likely to force the Soviets to make concessions at the arms talks.

Bitter debate has also been provoked by the Administration's request for $3 billion in research funds for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Popularly referred to as "Star Wars," SDI is intended as a space-based shield against incoming missiles, a way of intercepting missiles before they reach us. This amounts to a way of forcing the pace of competition in advanced-technology weapons — an area in which the United States currently has an advantage. Its critics feel that any proposal which stimulates competition in exotic weapons is likely to undercut the arms negotiation process and set off a dangerous and costly new phase in the arms race.

A third choice about armaments is approaching as well. It is described by *New York Times* columnist Flora Lewis as "one of those historic turning points that are noticed only when experts look back to see what went wrong after it's too late." She is referring to a decision that needs to be made about whether the US should continue to observe the terms of the SALT II treaty on the number of strategic weapons that each side can employ. While never ratified by the United States, both Washington and Moscow have abided by this treaty, which expires at the end of 1985. When a new Trident nuclear-powered submarine loaded with 24 multiple-warhead missiles starts its sea trials in the fall of 1985, the United States will exceed the number of weapons permitted under the treaty. At that point, a decision will have to be made about whether existing weapons should be dismantled to stay within the terms of the treaty. Some members of Congress think that since the Soviets have apparently violated certain of its provisions, the United States should ignore the treaty. Others, such as Senator Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), feel that doing so would undercut the arms negotia-

Tass from Sovfoto

A Soviet military parade in Red Square

tions, and that the United States has more to gain by living up to the treaty.

The Meaning of Security

In each of these debates, both sides agree upon the overall goal of enhancing the nation's security, and reducing the tensions that have accompanied years of confrontation with the USSR. But people differ over the meaning of security and the best means to that end.

Consider from this perspective what the President has to do in his twin roles as chief executive and commander-in-chief. His primary duty is to protect the nation's security. That means protecting the American people, its institutions and its territory from foreign aggression. It means maintaining the military capability necessary to counter initiatives made by the Soviets or any other country. It means deterring the Soviets from threatening our vital interests, such as oil shipments from the Persian Gulf.

There are various ways in which the President can protect American interests in a situation such as the Persian Gulf. The options range from negotiating with the Soviets to guarantee open shipping, to supporting friendly regimes in that area. The options include preparations to use force if necessary. But what kind of military capability is needed to protect our interests and our national security? And under what circumstances should we be prepared to use it?

Psychological Warfare

Decisions about military preparations and the national security are difficult in any case. Considering the power of nuclear weapons, these decisions take on an awesome significance. Decisions about weapon systems are often presented as if the choices are essentially technical matters, or a question of how much the nation can afford to spend on new military hardware. However, in deciding whether new weapons add to the nation's security, the most important factor is really quite a different one. It is the crucial matter of how the Soviets will respond.

What is new about warfare in the nuclear era is that the chief purpose of building weapons is no longer to use them, but to deter the enemy from using theirs. Such weapons do not have to be fired to be significant, both politically and militarily. Security in the nuclear era means having at all times the ability

to inflict unacceptable damage upon one's enemy, even after absorbing a first strike. Stability between the nuclear superpowers rests on the slender base of reciprocal vulnerability. As long as both sides calculate that the other is capable of inflicting a second strike, each refrains from the use of nuclear weapons.

Since, by definition, deterrence is based upon the calculation rather than the actual use of military power, the perceptions that adversaries have of each other become far more important in the nuclear era. Indeed, differences about the Soviets — about their leaders' motives, about the circumstances in which they might risk a first strike, about their reactions to our actions — lie at the very center of the debate about how we should regard military force and the threat of force in our national security effort.

Are the Soviets most accurately regarded as a revolutionary aggressor, or — less menacingly — as a major power with which we happen to have serious differences? Are their intentions mainly defensive or offensive? Is their goal simply to match our nuclear capability, or to be strong enough to threaten us with nuclear blackmail? These are the underlying questions in the debate over national security, and they are questions to which even well-informed experts give quite different answers.

"The Soviet Union is acquiring what can only be considered an offensive military force. They have continued to build far more intercontinental ballistic missiles than they could possibly need simply to deter an attack."

—President Ronald Reagan
March, 1983

"The strategic offensive forces of the United States continue to be developed and upgraded at full tilt and along a quite definite line — namely, that of acquiring a first strike capability."

—Soviet General Secretary
Yuri Andropov, 1983

Menacing Gestures, Deadly Intent

Some experts insist that the most important thing to recognize about the Soviet regime is the disproportionate influence that military considerations play in it. In their view, it is crucial to bear in mind that the Russians have historically been aggressors, resorting on one occasion after another to the use of force to attain their goals. The Soviet Union must be viewed as a hostile and implacable foe, intent upon taking advantage of any weakness on our part. The only question is whether we are willing to face the uncomfortable truth about the Soviets and their intentions, and whether we are prepared to take realistic measures to protect this nation's security.

Given the nature of our adversary, the best way to prevent war is to prepare for it. Since the Soviets only understand strength, it follows that to be secure we must regain a position of unmistakable military superiority. Since the Soviets cannot be trusted, hard-liners are skeptical about arms control. As they see it, America has little to show for 20 years of arms control talks. Most importantly, those talks have not prevented the Soviets from forging ahead with their military program.

To the extent that negotiation with the Soviets is in our interest, we need to recognize that the Soviets will not talk seriously as long as they are ahead in the arms race. Our best hope for achieving arms reductions is first to build up our military might. Then the Soviets may be convinced that it is in their interest to negotiate seriously to reduce arms. Part of the Administration's rationale in pushing for the Star Wars program and for more MX missiles is to persuade the Soviets that it is

LET ME EMPHASIZE AGAIN THAT YOU RUSSIANS HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO FEAR. THIS IS STRICTLY A DEFENSIVE SPACE SYSTEM.
NOW, WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A TINY SCALE MODEL OF A STAR WARS PROTOTYPE...
OOPS!

Don Wright, The *Miami News*

in their interest to negotiate in good faith for a safer world order.

It is crucially important to recognize how much has changed since the first two decades of the nuclear era, when unquestioned American superiority was the source of our security. During that period, the threat of massive retaliation was credible because the Soviets could not reply in kind. Since then, however, much has changed. In the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, the Soviets undertook a massive arms buildup. Over the past 20 years, the Russians have been spending more on their military effort than we have on ours. Estimates of Soviet military expenditures are inevitably somewhat uncertain. But many who take the hard-line position are convinced that throughout the late 1970s, the Soviets were spending half again as much as the United States. Moreover, despite heightened US defense efforts in recent years, they believe that Soviet spending still exceeds our own.

Consequently, the Soviets have made impressive advances in both the quantity and quality of their nuclear arsenal. In the decade after the Cuban missile crisis, the massive Soviet military effort could be explained as an effort to gain parity with the United States. But when their capabilities approached our own, the Soviets did not let up. The greatest concern of those who favor an American arms buildup is that the Soviets have not only caught up in the arms race, but may have actually forged ahead.

Thinking the Unthinkable

Because of their greater strength in certain areas — particularly land-based missiles — the Soviets are now capable of threatening US land-based missiles. Their missiles have enough nuclear warheads to destroy our land-based missiles, and they still have a reserve force to destroy other targets. The fear is that until at least the late 1980s when the MX is expected to be available in significant numbers, the United States will not be able to threaten a comparable counterattack. If our land-based missiles were knocked out by enemy attack, we would still have the option of using submarine-launched missiles to retaliate. But since those missiles are not as accurate as those fired from land, we may not be able to destroy the remaining Soviet missiles. Submarine-launched missiles could be used to devastate Soviet cities, of course. But in doing so, we would invite the Soviets to do the same thing to American cities. So the President would be left with the choice of unleashing unimaginable slaughter or giving in to Soviet demands — a choice between suicide and surrender.

That is the nightmare that the advocates of an arms buildup seek to avoid by strengthening the American defense effort and taking new measures such as the Strategic Defense Initiative. In the words of a statement from the Committee on the Present Danger: "Our country is in a period of danger, and the danger

Eastfoto

In the Soviet Union, the wounds of World War II have not been forgotten.

is increasing. Unless decisive steps are taken to alert the nation, and to change the course of its policy, our economic and military capacity will be inadequate to assure peace with security."

From this view, an American military buildup is a necessary response to steps already taken by the Soviet Union. Indeed, recent reports from the Defense Department on Soviet military capabilities chart what the Pentagon regards as rapid progress in their weapons technology — progress that has been especially marked in the areas of submarines, nuclear missiles, and space weaponry. In an assessment of Soviet military power released in April, the Pentagon described an expanding Soviet program in laser-weapon research which, it says, demonstrates the need for the President's space-based missile defense program. When that report was released, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said that it documents the "very relentless" nature of the Soviet buildup, and the need for continued American efforts to match it.

The people who look at the situation in this way are alarmed at the Soviet arms buildup, and convinced that their military superiority should be taken quite seriously. Their concern is that the logic of deterrence — that we need only enough retaliatory capability to deter the Soviets — is now used erroneously as an argument against strengthening our military capabilities. In the words of military analyst Patrick Glynn: "We are taking measures that logic and history suggest are making war more likely by making it more 'thinkable' — for Soviet leaders. The recommendation to meet the Soviet buildup with a buildup of our own comes not from belligerence or 'imperial ambitions' on the part of American leaders, but simply from the straightforward necessity of securing our safety."

A Wasteful and Provocative Program

There is, however, another quite different view of how American safety should be secured, a view which regards a military buildup as wasteful and provocative, a source of heightened tensions.

From the outset, people who take this position dismiss the "wicked witch" image of Soviet leaders as a pretext for increased American military efforts. Adversaries have often attributed to each other extremely hostile motives and the most formidable of capabilities in order to justify their own military buildup. As Lord Salisbury once wrote: "If you believe the doctors, nothing is wholesome; if you believe the theologians, nothing is innocent; if you believe the soldiers, nothing is safe." The best justification for an enlarged defense budget is an ever more menacing enemy. In this way, hard-liners in the Soviet Union and the United States feed off of each other.

Those who disagree with the hard-line perception do not deny the Soviet military buildup. But they attribute much less hostile motives to the leaders who have presided over it. If you view the Soviet leaders as men who remember that nation's

history and have a keen sense of the need for defense against foreign aggression — and real respect for American military power — the Soviet military buildup looks quite different.

More so than the people of Western Europe, and far more so than Americans, the Russians are vividly aware of the need to defend themselves against foreign aggression. They are also vividly aware of the high price exacted by World War II when they defended themselves against attack. The horrors of World War II — a conflict in which some 20 million Soviets were killed — are still frequently recalled by Russians. When Hitler's forces invaded, virtually every Soviet family suffered personal loss. Millions of Russian women did not marry because so many men were killed during the war. To this day, laying a wreath at a war memorial is a routine part of the marriage ceremony for most Russians.

In the words of Soviet expert Stephen F. Cohen: "The war forged a lasting bond between popular and official outlooks on the Soviet Union's overriding purpose at home and abroad. Henceforth, it was to do everything possible to guarantee that the country would never again be caught unprepared by a surprise attack. That explains the people's persistent support, despite the sacrifices required of them in everyday life, for the government's obsession with national security, including its hold over Eastern Europe and the high priority it gives to military expenditures."

Moreover, as those who stress the defensive goals of the Soviets point out, their leaders feel encircled by hostile powers. The Soviet Union is ringed with American bases — not just in Western Europe, but in Turkey, Korea, and Okinawa.

Former US ambassador to Moscow George Kennan describes the Soviet leaders as "men who share the horror of war that dominates most of the Soviet people, who have no desire to experience another military conflagration and no intention of launching one." He goes on to describe Soviet leaders as "men who suffer greatly under the financial burden which the maintenance of the present bloated arsenals impose on the Soviet economy, and who would like to be relieved of that burden without undue damage to Russia's security and to their own political prestige." They are, Kennan concludes, "men who have good and sound reason — rooted in their own interests — for desiring a peaceful and constructive relationship with the United States."

The Importance of Stability

As advocates of accommodation see it, an arms race justified by the necessity of keeping up with our chief adversary creates the false impression of a total conflict of interest between the two societies. In fact, what is most to be feared is a spiraling weapons race fed by mutual suspicions that leads eventually to armed conflict — just as a similar set of circumstances led in 1914 to a catastrophic war that was in no one's interest.

"The Soviet leaders are men who share the horror of war that dominates the Soviet people, who have no desire to experience another military conflagration and no intention of launching one."

—George Kennan

The best way to reduce the present danger is to engage the Soviet Union in the step-by-step process of negotiated agreements. Such negotiations can be successful if we allow the Soviets as much security as we seek for ourselves. Advocates of this view point to the accomplishments of such treaties as a 1972 ABM agreement, which limited the deployment of antiballistic missiles, and the SALT II agreement which, though never ratified by both sides, established a ceiling on the total number of strategic nuclear weapons.

Some dismiss any negotiation with the Soviets as a sham and a delusion. They feel that the Soviets have repeatedly violated such agreements in the past, and will no doubt continue to do so in the future. Most informed observers agree that violations have occurred, and also that both Washington and Moscow have sufficient means to monitor each other's activities, and to detect treaty violations. Differences arise, however, over the significance of such violations. Essentially, those who advocate negotiations with the Soviets conclude that the treaty violations that have taken place on both sides are of little strategic significance.

Chan Lowe/Fort Lauderdale *News & Sun-Sentinel*

The important thing, from their view, is that America already possesses an assured-destruction capability. We have a relatively invulnerable retaliatory force at sea in our submarine-launched missiles. Each of the Poseidon submarines carries 16 missiles, and each of those missiles carries 10 warheads. This is all the more impressive when you realize that the destructive capacity of each of those 160 warheads is about four times greater than that of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The newer Trident submarines are even more impressive. So the threat posed by these and other American weapons should be more than enough to deter Soviet attack.

This is why the people who take this position feel that it is unnecessary and dangerous to contemplate newer and even more formidable weapons. On one occasion after another, new weapons have been justified on the same grounds that are now being used to justify additional MX missiles — as an incentive to get the Soviets to the bargaining table and, once there, to deal seriously with us about arms reduction. The American arsenal is filled with weapons that were initially justified as bargaining chips, but were never bargained away.

Advocates of accommodation feel that the Soviets consented to renewed arms talks not because of the threat of new American weapons but because they felt that we were ready to seriously pursue such talks. We should consider the possibility that Soviet leaders have concluded that a continuation of the nuclear arms race is in no one's interest, and that they stand to gain from negotiating a significant abatement of it.

So this is as good a time as any, and better than most, to negotiate with the Soviets to contain the arms race, to take a first step toward the eventual reduction in arms. The Soviet Union has much to gain from such an agreement. They have built up an impressive military machine only at great cost to their domestic economy. Mr. Gorbachev is under great pressure to improve agriculture and the production of consumer goods — two goals that are unlikely to be accomplished if more and more resources are diverted into military expenditures.

The key to this nation's security, according to this view, lies not in threatening the Soviets with new weapons, for that creates even more instability. It lies, rather, in trying to maintain a situation in which both sides feel relatively secure. Since nuclear weapons cannot be abolished, our best hope for stability is to achieve a situation in which both sides have sufficient deterrent capability. It is important to avoid anything that creates instability between the superpowers, anything that poses an increased threat and allows either side an advantage in the arms race.

Ready or Not

Those who are convinced that the Soviets are hostile and aggressive insist that the only way of assuring our security is by responding to the Soviet arms buildup with substantial military initiatives of our own. But it could be, as their opponents argue, that we are now in a paradoxical situation where additional military expenditures — justified in the name of gaining the lead in the arms race — make us less secure by creating a less stable situation. President Reagan, like the Soviet leaders, has affirmed that a nuclear war could never be won and must not be fought. Why then, as opponents of a buildup ask, do we continue to arm as though we intend to fight?

These are sharply contrasting views of how best to provide for the nation's security, with far-reaching implications for defense planning and our relations with the Soviets. This debate hinges not on the technical merits of specific weapons systems, or their cost, but on perceptions of the Soviet leaders.

As the second round of the Geneva arms negotiations began late in May, the positions of the two sides seemed irreconcilable. Even as the arms talks proceeded, both sides were busy deploying new weapons systems, which will only heighten the strains in a situation that is already seriously strained. "Unless something changes," writes Soviet expert Marshall Shulman, "we are in for a long period of unregulated competition and higher tensions."

Some truly significant decisions need to be made. As difficult as it may be to sort through these perspectives to a carefully considered judgment, it is important to do just that. It is essential that the process of thinking through our options about how to protect the nation's security without risking nuclear confrontation not be confined to a small group of national defense experts and elected officials.

One thing is certain. Regardless of each country's view of the other, the United States and the Soviet Union are obliged to coexist. Since different views of the Soviets suggest such different strategies for protecting the nation's security, it is time to take a closer look to see who the Soviets really are.

5

New Rules for Superpower Relations?

"Decisions that will be made over the coming months are likely to shape relations between the United States and the Soviet Union for years to come. How should the superpower rivalry be managed?"

A reassessment of the rules according to which the United States relates to the Soviets is a particularly urgent task today because of the uneasy truce that currently exists, and the uncertain negotiations that are taking place. Together, the resumption of high-level negotiations about arms and trade, the accession to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, and an apparent willingness on the part of the Reagan administration to reconsider American policy toward the Soviets create a "window of opportunity" for redefining the superpower relationship. That opportunity is enhanced by the fact that Soviet leaders have begun to draft a new five-year plan in anticipation of the 27th Communist Party Congress next February — a plan that requires a reassessment of that nation's military goals, its trade relationships, and its domestic goals.

In each of the areas we have examined — in our global political relations, in our trade relations, in our military preparations — there are critical choices to be made about US policy toward the Soviets. In Central America, and in other regions of the world where the Soviet Union may be trying to expand its global influence, we face a choice between a confrontational approach and an effort to negotiate. In the area of trade relationships with the Soviets, there are unresolved questions about whether we can or should use the leverage of economic influence to sway Soviet policy, and about whether past efforts to do so have done more harm than good.

Decisions need to be made about what Soviet behavior this nation is prepared to tolerate, and what behavior is so threatening that we must respond. Decisions need to be made, too, about how far this nation is willing to go to protect its principles and interests when they are threatened by the Soviets.

Soviet Intentions and American Interests

Considering the gravity of these issues — ones that hinge on perceptions of the Soviets, their intentions, and their likely reactions to our actions — it is a matter of some importance to make up our minds about who the Soviets are. Because so much is at stake, we cannot afford to view the Soviets through a lens that is distorted by either hope or fear.

That means giving up — in George Kennan's words — "fatuous dreams of a happy and chummy collaboration with Moscow." The fact is that the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union are seriously opposed in many ways. Some who advocate a path of accommodation with the USSR recall the success the United States has had in normalizing relations with China. Although we still have disagreements with China, those differences are no longer considered in the old framework of enmity and armed conflict. When disputes arise, they are now managed through more peaceful channels. What changed in our relationship with the Chinese was not so much their behavior as our perception of them.

This example illustrates the potential of developing normal

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THE REDS ARE COMING!
STUDY SHOWS AVERAGE RUSSIAN 10ft. TALL!
BEWARE THE SOVIETS
NEW REPORTS
REPENT THE END IS NEAR!
AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S BUDGET TIME HERE IN WASHINGTON...

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relationships with nations whose interests and values differ from our own. And it casts an interesting light on the importance of our changed perceptions of a nation formerly considered an implacable foe. But the problem of relating to Moscow is a different one. While China is an underdeveloped nation that poses no direct threat to the United States, the Soviet Union is a genuine superpower, one that is armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons. As much as we might like to consider the Soviet government as a humane and harmless regime that wants nothing more than to protect itself from foreign aggressors, we would be well advised nonetheless to recognize the Soviet Union as a powerful, insecure, and often clumsy giant.

If we cannot afford to take too benign a view of the Soviets, neither can we afford to view the Soviets through an ideological lens that reveals more about our fears than about who the Soviets really are. The Soviets have been on our minds throughout the postwar period. Over the past 40 years, more has changed in Russia, and in the way in which Soviet leaders run the country, than in our perceptions of them. The only sound basis for American policy is a clear-eyed view of who the Soviets are today.

As we reassess the rules according to which the United States relates to its principal adversary, it is worth recalling how the Founding Fathers thought about America's international role. As dedicated as they were to certain principles that the American experiment should stand for, the Founding Fathers were hardheaded men. In their view, the fundamental requirement for any nation that would pursue a prudent course in international affairs is a clear view of its national interest. In George Washington's words: "The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or its affections, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest."

That is still good advice. What is needed most in our dealings with the Soviets is a certain realism — about the Soviet Union and its intentions, about US interests in relation to it, and about how American initiatives are likely to be perceived by Soviet leaders.

For Further Reading

Three excellent accounts of contemporary life in the Soviet Union are: *Russia: The People and the Power* by Robert G. Kaiser (New York: Atheneum, 1976); *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*, by David K. Shipler (New York: Times Books, 1984); and *The Russians* by Hedrick Smith (New York: Random House, 1976). For a penetrating examination of Soviet politics, economics, and society, see *Modern Soviet Society* by Basile Kerblay (New York: Random House, 1983).

The hard-line perspective on Soviet-American relations is reflected in *Survival Is Not Enough*, by Richard Pipes (New York: Atheneum, 1984). For a critical examination of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, see *The Nuclear Delusion: Soviet American Relations in the Atomic Age*, by George Kennan (New York: Random House, 1983). In *Russia: The Roots of Confrontation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), Robert V. Daniels argues that Soviet behavior has been shaped more by Russian history than by Marxist revolutionary ideology. For a definitive statement of the Soviet perspective see *The Soviet Viewpoint*, by Georgi Arbatov and Willem Oltmans (New York: Dodd-Mead, 1983). Finally, for an assessment of US policy toward the Soviet Union in the first year of the Reagan administration, see "U.S.-Soviet Relations: The Long Road Back" by William G. Hyland, in *Foreign Affairs* (Vol. 60, No. 3, 1981, pp. 525-50).

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NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

2. The Soviets: What Is the Conflict About?

Please answer these questions after you have attended the discussion or read the booklet. Answer them without reference to your earlier answers. Then hand in both reports to the forum moderator or mail them to the Domestic Policy Association in the attached prepaid envelope. In case no envelope is enclosed, you can send these pages to the Domestic Policy Association at 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45429.

PART I

1. Which of the following best describes what you see as the basis of our conflict with the Soviet Union? Our conflict with the Soviets is primarily:

a. Based on our opposition to Soviet attempts to promote worldwide revolution ☐

b. A contest between great powers, each pursuing its political interests, much like other conflicts between powerful nations in the past ☐

c. A struggle between historic rivals based on years of misunderstanding and miscalculation by both sides ☐

2. Which statement is closer to your view?

a. We should try to contain Soviet influence wherever it appears ☐

b. There are times when it is appropriate for us to do nothing, even when there is clear evidence of Soviet influence in other nations ☐

3. Which assessment of Soviet intentions is closer to your view?

a. To maintain their power, the Soviets must create a series of satellite governments throughout the world. Communism must grow or die ☐

b. The Soviets are neither able nor eager to carry out a program of world domination ☐

4. Which of these views of US policy in Nicaragua do you agree with more?

a. A Marxist regime in Nicaragua is such a threat that we should do everything we can to oppose the Sandinista government, short of sending in troops — such as assisting the *contras*, and imposing economic sanctions ☐

b. A war of harassment against Nicaragua is morally wrong. We should not aid forces such as the *contras* who engage in terrorism ☐

PART II

5. When it comes to trade and cultural exchange with the Soviet Union, which of these statements comes closer to your view?

a. Trade and cultural exchanges give us a chance to develop a constructive relationship with the Soviet Union ☐

b. It is not in our interest to encourage contacts that the Soviets use to their advantage ☐

6. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. Trade and cultural exchange with the Soviets are in our own economic self-interest ☐

b. The Soviets gain more from such trading relationships than we do ☐

7. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. Limiting trade and contacts with the Soviet Union is not in our interest ☐

b. Economic boycotts pose a significant threat to the Soviet system and could be useful in persuading Soviet leaders to change their policies ☐

PART II (continued)

8. When it comes to promoting trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union, which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should do all we can to promote trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union ☐

b. We should cease trade and cultural exchanges with the Soviets until they change their system ☐

PART III

9. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. The Soviets are primarily motivated by offensive concerns; they seek a military advantage to further their goal of world domination ☐

b. The Soviets are primarily motivated by defensive concerns; throughout history, they've been invaded by powerful aggressors and they're obsessed with the need to defend themselves ☐

10. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should build up American nuclear forces so that they are superior to Soviet forces in every category ☐

b. Our nuclear weapons have just one purpose, to deter the Soviets from attacking us. Anything more than that is both wasteful and provocative ☐

11. Which statement about the arms control talks at Geneva comes closer to your view?

a. The Soviets' aim at Geneva is propaganda, not serious negotiations to reach a fair arms control agreement. ☐

b. The Soviets are interested in serious arms control negotiations ☐

12. Which statement comes closer to your view?

a. We should weaken the Soviets at every opportunity because anything that weakens our enemies strengthens us ☐

b. It is in our interest for the Soviets to have a strong and stable economy, and for them to feel that their arms are generally equivalent to ours ☐

PART IV

13. Which of the following DPA activities did you participate in?

Read the booklet ☐
Attended a forum ☐
Both ☐
Neither ☐

14. Did you participate in a DPA forum *last* year?

Yes ☐
No ☐

15. Did you (or will you) participate in DPA forums on other topics *this* year?

Yes ☐
No ☐

16. Which of these age groups are you in?

Under 18 ☐
18-29 ☐
30-44 ☐
45-64 ☐
65 and over ☐

17. Are you a man or a woman?

Man ☐
Woman ☐

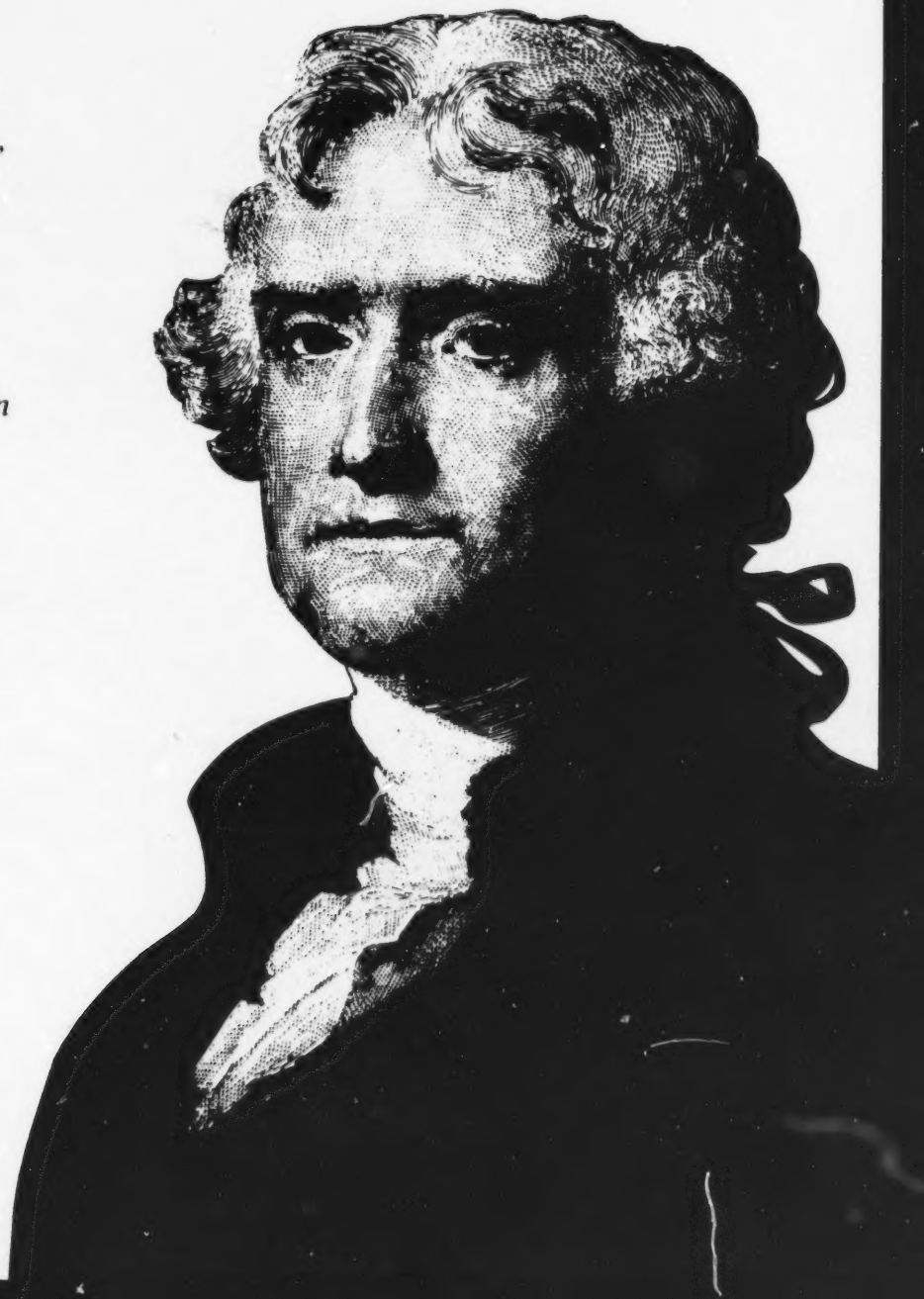
18. What is your zip code? _____

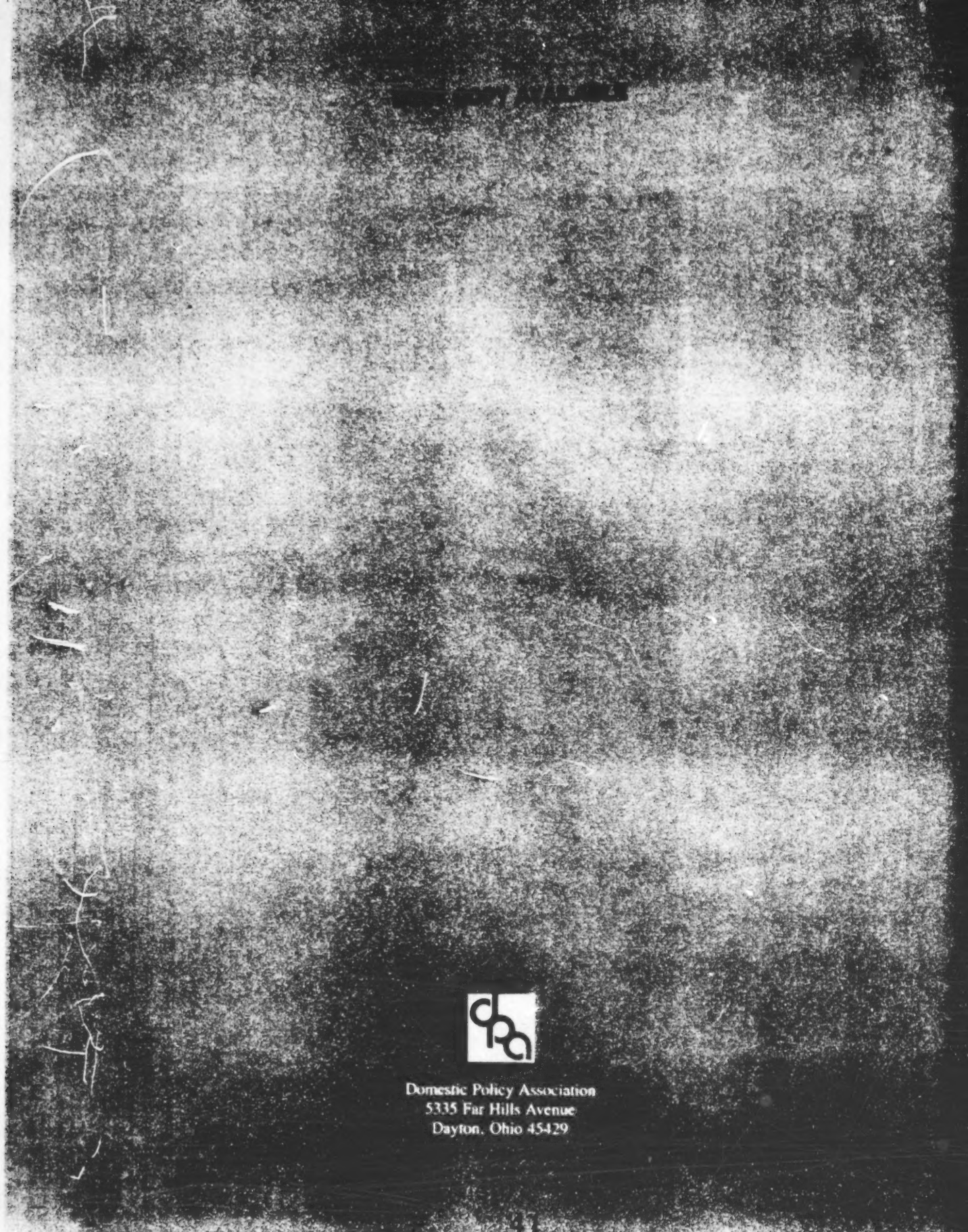
19. If there were just one message you could send to elected leaders on the topic of US-Soviet relations, what would it be?

3d

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it away from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

Th. Jefferson





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